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alliance. Moreover, marriages were carefully arranged between families, so that for a husband grossly to neglect his wife's rights was a breach, if not of etiquette, certainly of social contract. The priesthood may have offered a modest field of influence and attainment to women. However, history records no mention of any advantage deriving from temple service.

Men had the chief opportunities, and these lay in various directions. The early chroniclers, conditioned by their mediæval Spanish background, spoke of hereditary classes. In all probability, judging from Indian communities as a whole, there was *rank* but not *class* in the hereditary sense. As in our own society, a man could attain high *rank* through his own efforts, and through his eminence his children would consequently profit in their own social adjustment. Yet they could not reach their father's position unless they earned it through equivalent tribal service. *Wealth* did exist, and property in the form of rights to use land, tools and other possessions created a social and economic stratification. In theory and practice Aztec society was democratic, and the communal ownership of productive property was its economic base.[4]

A man attained rank through the measure of his tribal service. The wise farmer, the wily hunter, the brave warrior or the dexterous artisan gained admiration from his fellows because of superior skill. If his wisdom and judgment were conspicuous he might be elected as the clan representative to the tribal council, or even as chief. Similarly an individual who dedicated himself to learning the magic rituals to placate the gods, could become a medicine man or priest. However, in the populous and advanced city-states activities tended to become specialized, and greater opportunity led to a more

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tated against the social advantages of the gathering. To steal corn, the staple of life, when growing in the field, was a serious offense, demanding the death penalty or slavery, but a wayfarer might with impunity satisfy his hunger by plucking ears from rows adjacent to the road. To filch gold, silver and jade, precious substances reserved for religious ornaments, was also a mortal crime.

Murder, even of a slave, brought the death penalty. Rebels and traitors received the same fate, but kidnapers were sold into slavery. Drunkenness was a serious crime except at prescribed ceremonial occasions. Social disapproval, public disgrace, even death by stoning or beating, were penalties suffered by the intemperate. However, the old of both sexes, who had fulfilled their tribal obligations, were allowed great latitude in their potations.

The witch or practicer of black magic was sacrificed, and death was likewise the lot of him who impersonated a high official. A slanderer had his lips cut off and sometimes his ears as well. Brawling and fighting in the market place were dealt with severely, but in an ordinary case of assault the assailant paid for the cure of the assailed and for any damage done. Adultery was punished with great severity, even death, when committed outside the pale of the divorce laws. Hanging was the usual penalty for violation of the incest laws, and sodomy was punished with revolting brutality.

Thus reduced to cited instances, Aztec law was brutal. Actually, from childhood on, the individual grew up into correct social behavior; the violator of the code met with serious consequences. All people had some kind of personal property, but land belonged to the tribe and only its produce to the individual. Therefore, the elaborate legislation

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surrounding our own property concepts was unnecessary. There was little to harass the individual intellectually or economically. Existence was subject to divine favor, and a man fared much as did his fellows. Large as some towns were—Mexico City had three hundred thousand people—the sense of community was strong. Freedom of thought, individual liberty, personal fortunes, were nonexistent, but people lived according to a code that had worked well and continuously for centuries. An Aztec would have been horrified at the naked isolation of an individual's life in our Western world.

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CHAPTER VII

ECONOMY

The Domestic and Tribal Economy of the Aztec People

THE AZTEC SOCIAL SYSTEM provided a means by which people could exist harmoniously together in considerable numbers. The domestic and tribal economy of the Aztecs offered the food, shelter, tools and clothing to which man largely owes his dominant position on earth. The measure of a human society may be gauged by the relationship between the organization of the people themselves and their use of materials to build houses and equip them. The Aztecs' economy had the same basic simplicity as had their social organization; likewise it had the same flexibility in expanding to meet the needs of a growing population.[1]

Agriculture was the basis of Aztec life, and corn, *zea mays*, was the chief food plant. The cultivation of plants ensured a food supply near at hand, which was not subject to the fluctuations of game and thereby enabled man to take thought for the morrow. The clan system, as we have seen, recognized that the fruits of the land supported the tribe. Therefore, it was only natural that the tribe should own and control the land which supported its members.[2] (See Plate 38.)

The tribal council divided the land among the clans, and

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the leaders of each, in turn, apportioned its share among the heads of families justly and equitably. Sections were also reserved for the maintenance of the chief and the temple staff, for war supplies and the payment of tribute; these were worked communally, with some amount, no doubt, of slave labor. At the death of a tenant the land passed to his sons. If he died without issue the holding reverted to the clan for redivision, as was also the case if a tenant failed to cultivate his plot for a period of two years. Such a system could work equitably and profitably for all concerned so long as a society was relatively static and plenty of arable land was at hand. However, in the Valley of Mexico inequalities developed in the system.

The growing population of the Valley tribes used up all the available land, and families or clans had no way of adding to their farm holdings. A plot which produced ample supplies for a small family might yield a bare subsistence or less for a larger one. Normal variation in the richness of soil would result in similar injustices. Under such conditions the chiefs and priests who lived off the public lands would be far better off than the ordinary citizen whose holding, generation by generation, tended to diminish. Thus friction leading to foreign war and internal revolt was bound to result whenever a tribe could not expand its territorial limits to meet the needs of its population. The considerable migrations, like those of the Culhuas to Texcoco and Tenochtitlan or the Mixtec people to Texcoco years earlier, had their basis in a pressing economic necessity.[8]

The Tenochcas, who came late to the Valley, at a time when land was at a premium, had, we have seen, a difficult time in withstanding their hungry neighbors. Forced to re-

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712 1524, gives an approximate picture of the distribution of these edifices, or rather clusters of buildings.[31]

346. "They called these temples 'teocallis,' and we found all over
361 "the land that in the best part of the settlement they made a great
"quadrangular court, which, in the largest pueblo, was one cross-
"bow shot from one corner to another, while in the smaller places
"it was not as large. This court they enclosed by a wall, many of
"which enclosures were with battlements; the entrances looking
"towards the chief highways and streets, which all terminated at
"the court, and even, in order to still more honor their temples,
"they led their roads up to these in a straight line from two and
"three leagues distance. It was a wonderful aspect, to witness
"from the top of the chief temple, how from all the quarters and
"the minor places, the roadways all led up in a straight line to
"the courts of the teocallis, . . . the devil did not content
"himself with the aforesaid teocallis, but in each pueblo and in
"each quarter, as far as a quarter of one league off, there were
"other small courts containing, sometimes only one, sometimes
"three or four teocallis . . . . ."

712 The arms and stores contained in the "houses of darts," are
● 421 often regarded as having belonged to the chiefs, or so-called "Kings" of the Mexican tribe, and the buildings themselves are mentioned as "royal storehouses," or "arsenals." It was not so, however. The arms and stores belonged to the people, and they were under the control of certain stewards ("calpixca") who distributed them to the military chiefs of the tribe, whenever any decision of the head-council, or any sudden emergency required it.[32]

temple, he thought thus to disarm the Mexicans, burning the arms (300 cartloads, says Tapia). Herrera, Dec. II, lib. VIII, cap. IX, p. 214 ("pareciendo á Hernando Cortés, "que era mas seguro consejo quitar las armas al enemigo pues la ocasion presente era "para ello muy aparejada"), together with that chief. But he only emptied one of these "houses of arms," and soon found out that the Mexicans had several others left.

[31] Fray Toribio, of Benavente (Kingdom of Leon in Spain), calling himself "Motolinia" (poor, unfortunate, unhappy), arrived at Mexico about the 17th of June, 1524. He was one of the first twelve Franciscan missionaries sent to New-Spain. The above quotation is from his "Historia de los Indios de Nueva-España," written about 1540. (Tratado I, cap. XII, pp. 63 and 65.) He died on the 9th of Aug., 1569.

[32] The "calpixqui" were civil functionaries, stewards, gatherers of tribute, to whose care the public stores were entrusted. The name is generally translated as "mayordomo," even by Molina (Vocab., II, p. 11). Its proper signification, however, would be derived from "tlacatl," man, and "pixqui," "what is gathered from the crops," therefore collectors or gatherers. Tezozomoc relates that before the foray against the tribes of Cuetlaxtlan: "Thus the calpixca or stewards of the tribes gave to their quar-"ters (stores and supplies of all kinds, too numerous to mention)." (Cap. XXXII, p.

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Even ornaments and dresses were also preserved at some of those places.[33]

We may divide the *armament* of the Mexicans into weapons for offence and defensive armour for protection.

Among the offensive arms the *missiles* occupy the principal place, as we may infer from the general mode of Indian warfare, which consists in striking an enemy, if possible, from a distance, and with as little risk to the assailant as possible, too. *Darts* or *javelins*, *bows* and *arrows*, *slings* and *stones*, were therefore of primary importance to the Mexican warrior.

The dart or javelin ("*tlacochtli*," "*tlatzontectli*") was the main weapon of the Mexicans.[34] It consisted of a short spear made of hard and elastic canewood ("*otlatl*"), whose point, shaped after the manner of the well known arrow-head, was mostly of flint, of obsidian, and perhaps, occasionally, of copper. This point or head was inserted into the stem or rod through a slit at its end, gummed in, and fastened besides by a strong thread wound around it.[35] The javelin sometimes had two or three branches with points, so as to strike several wounds at once,[36] the warrior often had it tied to his arm by a long cord, but sometimes, also, he carried a number of darts loose.[37]

49.) Bernal-Diez says that "mayordomos" had control of the "houses of arms." (Cap. XCI, p. 87, Vedia, II.) At their head was the "Petlacalcatl." "or man of the house of chests," from "petlacalli," chest or box made out of canes. Bernal-Diez mentions that functionary, but says they called him Tapia, his Indian title he does not remember (Cap. XCI). Each tribe subject to Mexico had a "calpixqui" residing among it.

[33] Tezozomoc (Cap. XXXV, p. 35, and LXX, p. 119).

[34] Tezozomoc never mentions the bow and arrow, but always "varas tostadas," "varas arrojadizas," "tlatzontectli." Rods hardened by fire were used *once* by the Mexicans, at the time of their most abject misery, when fighting for the Culhua against Xochimilco (Clavigero, lib. II, cap. XVI). Even the poor aborigines of the Lucayos (Bahamas) used points of fish-bone, and not simply hardened points of wood. Mendieta (Lib. II, cap. XXVI, p. 130).

[35] Gomara ("Conquista," p. 345. Vedia, vol. I).

[36] Clavigero (Lib. VII, cap. XXIII).

[37] It would be difficult, otherwise, to account for the number of darts "spent" in the engagements, had each warrior carried but one javelin. Torquemada (Lib. VI, cap. XXI, p. 43) mentions a sort of cross-bow (ballesta), which he calls "atlatl," by the means of which they are said to have sped their darts ("que tiraban con cierto artificio, que llamaron Atlatl"). "Atlatl," however, means a strap ("amiento") fastening the helmet around the chin. Mendieta says: "Al principio jugaban de hondas y varas "como dardos que sacaban con jugaderas y las tiraban muy recias." "Jugadera" means a shuttle. In his note to Durán (Cap. IV, p. 31), "investando aquel modo de ar-"mas y varas arrojadizas que llamamos flegas." Señor Ramirez says "Refiérese pro-"bablemente al arma Mexicana llamada Atlatl, especie de ballesta, que segun la tradi-"cion fué inventada en Tacubaya . . . ." "Flaga" is a trident or harpoon. The use of the cross-bow, therefore, by the Mexicans, as the term "ballesta" implies, while

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intervening ditch, and throwing it on the chinampa, by which means the ground is raised generally about a yard, and thus forms a small fertile garden, covered with the finest culinary vegetables, fruits and flowers . . . . . ."[37]

Each consanguine relationship thus gradually surrounded the surface on which it dwelt with a number of garden plots sufficient to the wants of its members.[38] The aggregate area thereof, including the abodes, formed the "*calpullalli*"—soil of the "calpulli,"[39] *and was held by it as a unit;* the *single tracts*, however, being tilled and used for the benefit of the *single families*.[40] The mode of tenure of land among the Mexicans at that period was therefore very simple. The tribe claimed its *territory*, "ALTEPETLALLI," an undefined expanse over which it *might extend*, —the "calpules," however, *held* and *possessed within that territory* such portions of it as were *productive;* each "calpulli" being *sovereign* within its limits, and assigning to its individual members *for their use* the minor tracts into which the soil was parcelled in consequence of their mode of cultivation. If, therefore, the terms "altepetlalli" and "calpulalli" are occasionally regarded as *identical*, it is because the former indicates the *occupancy*, the latter *the distribution* of the soil.[41] We thus recognize in the calpulli, or kindred group, the unit of tenure of whatever soil the Mexicans deemed worthy of definite possession. Further on we

[37] "Six Months Residence and Travels in Mexico," by W. Bullock. London, 1824. Cap. XIII, p. 179. It is not devoid of interest to compare the descriptions of this rather superficial, though still truthful observer, with the account of the ancient Chinampas as preserved to us in Tezozomoc (cap. III, p. 9). Durán (cap. VI, pp. 50 and 51). The Sosts or rafts mentioned by these old authors were nothing else but the chinampas or "floating gardens." Therefore also Tezozomoc uses the term "camellon," or garden-bed. (See also Acosta, Lib. VII, cap. IX, p. 473.) Torquemada (Lib. XIII, cap. XXXII, p. 488). Veytia (Lib. II, cap. XV, p. 142).

[38] Durán (Cap. V). Tezozomoc (Cap. III, p. 8). Acosta (Lib. VII, cap. IX, p. 473). Torquemada (Lib. III, cap. XXXIII, p. 291. Lib. II, cap. XV, p. 101). Clavigero (Lib. II, cap. XVII).

[39] Alonzo de Zurita (p. 51). Ixtlilxochitl ("Hist. des Chichim," cap. XXXV, p. 242). Torquemada (Lib. XIV, cap. VII, p. 545). Bustamante ("Tezcoco en los ultimos Tiempos de sus antiguos Reyes," p. 122).

[40] Zurita ("Rapport, etc.," pp. 52, 56, 57, 60).—De l'Ordre de Succession observé par les Indiens, etc., etc. (copy of an anonymous MSS. from Simancas, contained in the Uguina collection, and translated by Mr. Ternaux-Compans in his "Recueil de pièces, etc., pp. 223 and 224.)

[41] Zurita ("Rapport, etc.," pp. 51–64). Herrera (Dec. III, Lib. IV, cap. XVII, p. 138). Ramirez de Fuenleal, Bishop of San Domingo (Letter of 3 Nov., 1532, Mexico, to the Emperor Charles V. "Recueil" of Ternaux, p. 253). See also the Introduction to the "Real Ejecutoria de S. M. sobre Tierras y Reservas de Pechos y Paga. Pertenecients á los Caciques de Axapusco," in "Col. de Doc." of Icazbalceta (Vol. II, p. XIII).

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shall investigate how far individuals, as members of this communal unit, participated in the aggregate tenure.

In the course of time, as the population further increased, *segmentation* occurred within the four original "quarters;" new "calpulli," being formed.[42] For *governmental* purposes this segmentation produced a new result by leaving, more particularly in military affairs, the first four clusters as *great subdivisions*.[43] But these, as soon as they had disaggregated, *ceased* to be any longer *units* of territorial possession, their original areas being held thereafter by the "minor quarters" (as Herrera, for instance, calls them), who exercised, each one within its limits, the same sovereignty which the original "calpulli" formerly held over the whole.[44] A further consequence of this disaggregation was (by removing the tribal council farther from the calpules) the necessity for an *official building*, exclusively devoted to the business of the *whole* tribe alone.[45]

[42] This successive formation of new "calpulli" is nowhere explicitly stated, but it is implied by the passage of Durán which we have already quoted (Cap. V, p. 42). It also results from their military organization as described in the "Art of War," (p. 115). With the increase of population, the original kinships necessarily disaggregated further, as we have seen it to have occurred among the Qquiché (See "Popol-Vuh" quoted in our note 7), forming smaller groups of consanguinei. After the successful war against the Tecpanecas, of which we shall speak hereafter, we find at least twenty chiefs, representing as many kins (Durán, cap. XI. p. 97), besides three more, adopted then from those of Culhuacan (Id. pp. 98 and 99). This indicates an increase.

[43] "Art of War, etc.," pp. 115 and 120.

[44] Torquemada (Lib. III, cap. XXIV, p. 296). "I confess it to be truth that this city of Mexico is divided into four principal quarters, each one of which contains others, smaller ones, included, and all, in common as well as in particular, have their commanders and leaders . . . ." Zurita ("Rapport," p. 56-64). That the smaller subdivisions were those who held the soil, and not the four original groups, must be inferred from the fact, that the ground was attached to the calpulli. Says Zurita (p. 51.) "They (the lands) do not belong to each inhabitant of the village, but to the calpulli which possesses them in common." On the other hand Torquemada states (Lib. XIV, cap. VII, p. 545): "that in each pueblo, according to the number of people, there should be (were) clusters ("parcialidades") of diverse people and families . . . . These clusters were distributed by calpules, which are quarters ("barrios"), and it happened that one of the aforesaid clusters sometimes contained three, four, and more, calpules, according to the population of the place ("pueblo") or tribe." The same author further affirms: "These quarters, and streets, were all assorted and levelled, with so much accuracy, that those of one quarter or street could not take a palm of land from those of another, and the same was with the streets, their lots running (being scattered) all over the pueblo." Consequently, there were no communal lands allotted to the four great quarters of Mexico as such, but each one of the kinships (calpules) held its part of the original aggregate. Compare Gomara (Vedia, Vol. I, "Conq. de Méjico," p. 434. "Among tributaries it is a custom, etc., etc." Also p. 440). Clavigero (Lib. VII, cap. XIV). "Each quarter has its own tract, without the least connection with the others."

[45] Compare Durán (Cap. XI, p. 87). Acosta (Lib. VII, cap. XXXI, p. 470). It appears as if the "tecpan" had not been constructed previous to the middle of the 14th cen-